

YOGA PRACTICE GUIDE

(योग कर्मसु कौशलम्)



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1-32

2-17

3-18

4-19

5-20

6-21

7-22

8-23

9-24

10-25

11-26

12-27

13-28

14-29

15-30

16-31

TABLE OF CONTANT

- ❖ *What is Yoga*
- ❖ *Yoga history?*
- ❖ *How to do yoga ?*
- ❖ *Some yoga asana ?*
- ❖ *Benefit's*

योग कर्माशु कौशलम्



Tada – asana - The mountain Pose

What is Yoga?

Derived from the Sanskrit word yuj, Yoga means union of the individual consciousness or soul with the Universal Consciousness or Spirit. Yoga is a 5000 year old Indian body of knowledge. Though many think of yoga only as a physical exercise where people twist, turn, stretch, and breathe in the most complex ways, these are actually only the most superficial aspect of this profound science of unfolding the infinite potentials of the human mind and soul.

The science of Yoga imbibe itself the complete essence of the Way of Life, including - Gyan Yoga or philosophy, Bhakti Yoga or path of devotional bliss, *Karma Yoga* or path of blissful action, and *Raja Yoga* or path of mind control. *Raja Yoga* is further divided into eight parts. At the heart of the *Raja Yoga* system, balancing and unifying these various approaches, is the practice of Yoga Asana.

Some other definition –1. Yoga is the perfect example of holistic health because of this combination of mind and body. After all the body cannot exist without the mind and vice versa.

2. By repairing the body, we are more able to repair the mind. If you feel tense in the neck, shoulders, or hips, you'll find it more difficult to relax and be happy.

3. In order to do this Yoga is comprised of the asana (physical postures) and a philosophy that offers tools to finding true, lasting happiness

Low Lunge-Anjaneyasana

(Adho Mukha Svanasana), exhale and step your right foot forward between your hands, aligning the right knee over the heel. Then lower your left knee to the floor and, keeping the right knee fixed in place, slide the left back until you feel a comfortable stretch in the left front thigh and groin. Turn the top of your left foot to the floor

Inhale and lift your torso to upright. As you do, sweep your arms out to the sides and up, perpendicular to the floor. Draw the tailbone down toward the floor and lift your pubic bone toward your navel. Lift your chest from the firmness of your shoulder blades against the back torso.

Take your head back and look up, being careful not to jam the back of your neck. Reach your pinkies toward the ceiling. Hold for a minute, exhale your torso back to the right thigh and your hands to the floor, and turn your back toes under. With another exhale, lift your left knee off the floor and step back to Adho Mukha Svanasana. Repeat with the left foot forward for the same length of time.

Beginner's Tip

To improve balance practice this pose facing a wall. Press the big toe of the front foot against the wall and stretch your arms up, finger tips to the wall.

HISTROY OF YOGA

Yoga is a 5000 year old tradition. In India monks went into seclusion for years with the goal of creating a disease free strong body. The original intention was to be able to sit in meditation for hours but with a achy body that is impossible to do.

The postures of yoga were each created for a specific health purpose. To Detoxify, realign musculature, strengthen muscle, and create flexibility. Along with correcting the fallacies of the body, these yogis went about trying to find how to correct fallacies of the mind. An entire philosophy was created, based solely around leading a human being finding his or

Her bliss. The teachings were so dead-on that they are still practiced 5000 years later.

Yoga has become more popular than ever, with celebrities, politicians, business people, and almost every walk of life currently practicing.

The important thing to understand about this way of thinking is yoga is not a religion. You can be from any background and reap its benefit



Low Lunge-Anjaneyasana

Ten important yoga pose

- I. Child Posture -Bala Asana**
- II. Padma asana - Lotus Posture**
- III. Gomukha asana - Cow Face Posture**
- IV. Tada – asana - The mountain Pose**
- V. Low Lunge-Anjaneyasana**
- VI. Ardachandra-asana – The Half moon Pose**
- VII. Eagle Pose. Garudasana**
- VIII. Bharadvajasana -Bharadvaja's Twist**
- IX. The Dolphin Posture-Makarasana**
- X. Corpse Pose: Savasana**

Child Posture -Bala Asana

Kneel on the floor. Touch your big toes together and sit on your heels, then separate your knees about as wide as your hips.

Exhale and lay your torso down between your thighs. Broaden your sacrum across the back of your pelvis and narrow your hip points toward the navel, so that they nestle down onto the inner thighs. Lengthen your tailbone away from the back of the pelvis while you lift the base of your skull away from the back of your neck.

Lay your hands on the floor alongside your torso, palms up, and release the fronts of your shoulders toward the floor. Feel how the weight of the front shoulders pulls the shoulder blades wide across your back.

Balasana is a resting pose. Stay anywhere from 30 seconds to a few minutes. Beginners can also use Balasana to get a taste of a deep forward bend, where the torso rests on the thighs. Stay in the pose from 1 to 3 minutes. To come up, first lengthen the front torso, and then with an inhalation lift from the tailbone as it presses down and into the pelvis.

Beginner's Tip

We usually don't breathe consciously and fully into the back of the torso. Balasana provides us with an excellent opportunity to do just that. Imagine that each inhalation is "doming" the back torso toward the ceiling, lengthening and widening the spine. Then with each exhalation release the torso a little more deeply into the fold.

Benefits

Gently stretches the hips, thighs, and ankles
Calms the brain and helps relieve stress and fatigue
Relieves back and neck pain when done with head and torso supported



Child Posture -Bala Asana

Padma asana - Lotus Posture

Sit on the floor with your legs straight in front. Bend your right knee and bring the lower leg up into a cradle: The outer edge of the foot is notched into the crook of the left elbow, the knee is wedged into the crook of the right elbow, and the hands are clasped (if possible) outside the shin. Lift the front torso toward the inner right leg so the spine lengthens (and the lower back does not round). Rock your leg back and forth a few times, exploring the full range of movement of the hip joint.

Bend the left knee and turn the leg out. Rock your right leg far out to the right, then lock the knee tight by pressing the back of the thigh to the calf. Next swing the leg across in front of your torso, swiveling from the hip and not the knee, and nestle the outside edge of the foot into the inner left groin. Be sure to bring the right knee as close to the left as possible, and press the right heel into the left lower belly. Ideally the sole of the foot is perpendicular to the floor, not parallel.

Now lean back slightly, pick the right leg up off the floor, and lift the left leg in front of the

right. To do this hold the underside of the left shin in your hands. Carefully slide the left leg over the right, snuggling the edge of the left foot deep into the right groin. Again swivel into position from the hip joint, pressing the heel against the lower belly, and arrange the sole perpendicular to the floor. Draw the knees as close together as possible. Use the edges of the feet to press the groins toward the floor and lift through the top of the sternum. If you wish, you can place the hands palms up in *jnana mudra*, with the thumbs and first fingers touching.

Padmasana is the sitting asana par excellence, but it's not for everybody. Experienced students can use it as a seat for their daily pranayama or meditation, but beginners may need to use other suitable positions. In the beginning, only hold the pose for a few seconds and quickly release. Remember that Padmasana is a "two-sided pose," so be sure to work with

Eagle Pose. Garudasana .

Stand in [Tadasana](#). Bend your knees slightly, lift your left foot up and, balancing on your right foot, cross your left thigh over the right. Point your left toes toward the floor, press the foot back, and then hook the top of the foot behind the lower right calf. Balance on the right foot.

Stretch your arms straight forward, parallel to the floor, and spread your scapulas wide across the back of your torso. Cross the arms in front of your torso so that the right arm is above the left, then bend your elbows. Snug the right elbow into the crook of the left, and raise the forearms perpendicular to the floor. The backs of your hands should be facing each other.

Press the right hand to the right and the left hand to the left, so that the palms are now facing each other. The thumb of the right hand should pass in front of the little finger of the left. Now press the palms together (as much as is possible for you), lift your elbows up, and stretch the fingers toward the ceiling.

Stay for 15 to 30 seconds, then unwind the legs and arms and stand in Tadasana again. Repeat for the same length of time with the arms and legs reversed.

Beginner's Tip

Beginners often find it difficult to wrap the arms around until the palms touch. Stretch your arms straight forward, parallel to the floor, while holding onto the ends of a strap. Follow the rest of the instructions stated in step 2 above and keep the strap taut between your hands. Beginners also find it difficult to hook the raised-leg foot behind the standing-leg calf, and

both leg crosses each time you practice. Gradually add a few seconds each week to your pose until you can sit comfortably for a minute or so. Ideally you should work with a teacher to monitor your progress.

Beginner's Tip

During the cradle warm-up the outer ankle is often overstretched. Push through the inner edge of the foot against the upper arm to equalize the two ankles. Then when you bring the foot across into the opposite groin, see that you maintain this even stretch of the inner and outer ankles.

Benefits

- Calms the brain
- Stimulates the pelvis, spine, abdomen, and bladder
- Stretches the ankles and knees
- Eases menstrual discomfort and sciatica

then balance on the standing foot. As a short-term option cross the legs but, instead of hooking the raised foot and calf, press the big toe of the raised-leg foot against the floor to help maintain your balance.

Benefits

Strengthens and stretches the ankles and calves

Stretches the thighs, hips, shoulders, and upper back

Improves concentration

Improves sense of balance



Eagle Pose. Garudasana .



Corpse Pose: Savasana

Bharadvajasana -Bharadvaja's Twist

Sit on the floor with your legs straight out in front of you. Shift over onto your right buttock, bend your knees, and swing your legs to the left. Lay your feet on the floor outside your left hip, with the left ankle resting in the right arch.

Inhale and lift through the top of the sternum to lengthen the front torso. Then exhale and twist your torso to the right, keeping the left buttock on or very close to the floor. Lengthen your tailbone toward the floor to keep the lower back long. Soften the belly.

Tuck your left hand under your right knee and bring your right hand to the floor just beside your right buttock. Pull your left shoulder back slightly, pressing your shoulder blades firmly against your back even as you continue to twist the chest to the right.

You can turn your head in one of two directions: continue the twist of the torso by turning it to the right; or counter the twist of the torso by turning it left and looking over the left shoulder at your feet.

With every inhalation lift a little more through the sternum, using the push of the fingers on the floor to help; with every exhalation twist a little more. Stay for 30 seconds to 1 minute, then release with an exhalation, return to the starting position, and repeat to the left for the same length of time.

Beginner's Tip

If you tilt onto the twisting-side buttock (which compresses the lower back), raise it up on a thickly folded blanket. Consciously sink both sitting bones toward the floor.

Benefits

Stretches the spine, shoulders, and hips

Gomukha asana - Cow Face Posture

Sit in [Dandasana \(Staff Pose\)](#), then bend your knees and put your feet on the floor. Slide your left foot under the right knee to the outside of the right hip. Then cross your right leg over the left, stacking the right knee on top of the left, and bring the right foot to the outside of the left hip. Try to bring the heels equidistant from the hips: with the right leg on top you'll have to tug the right heel in closer to the left hip. Sit evenly on the sitting bones.

Inhale and stretch your right arm straight out to the right, parallel to the floor. Rotate your arm inwardly; the thumb will turn first toward the floor, then point toward the wall behind you, with the palm facing the ceiling. This movement will roll your right shoulder slightly up and forward, and round your upper back. With a full exhalation, sweep the arm behind your torso and tuck the forearm in the hollow of your lower back, parallel to your waist, with the right elbow against the right side of your torso. Roll the shoulder back and down, then work the forearm up your back until it is parallel to your spine. The back of your hand will be between your shoulder blades. See that your right elbow doesn't slip away from the right side of your to

Now inhale and stretch your left arm straight forward, pointing toward the opposite wall, parallel to the floor. Turn the palm up and, with another inhalation, stretch the arm straight up toward the ceiling, palm turned back. Lift actively through your left arm, then with an exhalation, bend the elbow and reach down for the right hand. If possible, hook the right and left fingers.

Lift the left elbow toward the ceiling and, from the back armpit, descend the right elbow toward the floor. Firm your shoulder blades against your back ribs and lift your chest. Try to keep the left arm right beside the left side of your head.

Stay in this pose about 1 minute. Release the arms, uncross the legs, and repeat with the arms and legs reversed for the same length of time. Remember that whichever leg is on top, the same-side arm is lower.



Massages the abdominal organs

Relieves lower backache, neck pain, and sciatica

Helps relieve stress

Improves digestion

Especially good in the second trimester of pregnancy for strengthening the lower back

Therapeutic for carpal tunnel syndrome



Beginner's Tips

Beginners often have a difficult time getting both sitting bones to rest evenly on the floor, which can make it difficult for the knees to stack on top of each other evenly. When the pelvis is tilted, the spine can't properly extend. Use a folded blanket or bolster to lift the sitting bones off the floor and support them evenly.

Benefits

Stretches the ankles, hips and thighs, shoulders, armpits and triceps, and chest



The Dolphin Posture-Makarasana

Come onto the floor on your hands and knees. Set your knees directly below your hips and your forearms on the floor with your shoulders directly above your wrists. Firmly press your palms together and your forearms into the floor.

Curl your toes under, then exhale and lift your knees away from the floor. At first keep the knees slightly bent and the heels lifted away from the floor. Lengthen your tailbone away from the back of your pelvis and press it lightly toward the pubis. Against this resistance, lift the sitting bones toward the ceiling, and from your inner ankles draw the inner legs up into the groins.

Continue to press the forearms actively into the floor. Firm your shoulder blades against your back, then widen them away from the spine and draw them toward the tailbone. Hold your head between the upper arms; don't let it hang or press heavily against the floor.

You can straighten your knees if you like, but if your upper back rounds it's best to keep them bent. Continue to lengthen your tailbone away from the pelvis and lift the top of your sternum away from the floor.

Stay between 30 seconds to one minute. Then release your knees to the floor with an exhale.



Gomukha asana - Cow Face Posture



Tada – asana - The mountain Pose

Stand with the bases of your big toes touching, heels slightly apart (so that your second toes are parallel). Lift and spread your toes and the balls of your feet, then lay them softly down on the floor. Rock back and forth and side to side.

Gradually reduce this swaying to a standstill, with your weight balanced evenly on the feet.

Firm your thigh muscles and lift the knee caps, without hardening your lower belly. Lift the inner ankles to strengthen the inner arches, then imagine a line of energy all the way up along your inner thighs to your groins, and from there through the core of your torso, neck, and head, and out through the crown of your head. Turn the upper thighs slightly inward. Lengthen your tailbone toward the floor and lift the pubis toward the navel.

Press your shoulder blades into your back, then widen them across and release them down your back. Without pushing your lower front ribs forward, lift the top of your sternum straight toward the ceiling. Widen your collarbones. Hang your arms beside the torso.

Balance the crown of your head directly over the center of your pelvis, with the underside of your chin parallel to the floor, throat soft, and the tongue wide and flat on the floor of your mouth. Soften your eyes.

Tadasana is usually the starting position for all the standing poses. But it's useful to practice Tadasana as a pose in itself. Stay in the pose for 30 seconds to 1 minute, breathing easily.

Beginner's Tip

You can improve your balance in this pose by standing with your inner feet slightly apart, anywhere from 3 to 5 inches

Corpse Pose: Savasana

In Savasana it's essential that the body be placed in a neutral position. Sit on the floor with your knees bent, feet on the floor, and lean back onto your forearms. Lift your pelvis slightly off the floor and, with your hands, push the back of the pelvis toward the tailbone, then return the pelvis to the floor. Inhale and slowly extend the right leg, then the left, pushing through the heels. Release both legs, softening the groins, and see that the legs are angled evenly relative to the mid-line of the torso, and that the feet turn out equally. Narrow the front pelvis and soften (but don't flatten) the lower back.

With your hands lift the base of the skull away from the back of the neck and release the back of the neck down toward the tailbone. If you have any difficulty doing this, support the back of the head and neck on a folded blanket. Broaden the base of the skull too, and lift the crease of the neck diagonally into the center of the head. Make sure your ears are equidistant from your shoulders.

Reach your arms toward the ceiling, perpendicular to the floor. Rock slightly from side to side and broaden the back ribs and the shoulder blades away from the spine. Then release the arms to the floor, angled evenly relative to the mid-line of torso. Turn the arms outward and stretch them away from the space between the shoulder blades. Rest the backs of the hands on the floor as close as you comfortably can to the index finger knuckles. Make sure the shoulder blades are resting evenly on the floor. Imagine the lower tips of the shoulder blades are lifting diagonally into your back toward the top of the sternum. From here, spread the collarbones.

Benefits

Improves posture

Strengthens thighs, knees, and ankles

Firms abdomen and buttocks

Relieves sciatica

Reduces flat feet